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THE EGGS OF THE DRAGON-FLY.—Since printing the article on the Dragon-fly in our last number we have had an opportunity of seeing the eggs collected by a friend at Haverhill, July 3d, at the first field-meeting of the Essex Institute. The eggs are laid in immense numbers in long ropy, gelatinous masses, nearly one-half an inch thick, attached to an aquatic grass. When folded together, the entire mass was nearly the size of a hen's egg.

The new-born larvæ looked like small spiders swimming in the water, as the abdomen is very short, and the legs remarkably long, the hindermost pair being one-half longer than the body. The body is very transparent, and through the thin wall can be seen the blood coursing rapidly through the dorsal vessel or heart, and returning along the side of the body, as also the smaller currents thrown into and returning from the legs. The little creatures are very active, swimming by hundreds through the water, or crawling over the mass of eggs.

We shall speak at another time of the changes the embryo undergoes before hatching. The eggs are only two and one-half hundredths of an inch long. It is probable that they are the young of Diplax, as they bear a close resemblance to the pupa (fig. 4) figured in our last number.

RAPID CHANGE OF COLOR IN FISH.—I caught the other day in fishing for shells, a small "horned-pout," about two inches long, intensely black in color. I put him in a white bowl to examine him. In half an hour he had turned white, so clear and pretty in color, that you could see the circulation under the skin of the body. Only his "feelers" and eyes remained black, and he is now, three days after capture, lively, healthy, and well bleached. Do these fish usually change their color in this way?—E. C. BOLLES, *Portland, Me.*

NATURAL HISTORY CALENDAR.

INSECTS IN SEPTEMBER.—Few new insects make their first appearance for the season during this month. Most of the species which abound in the early part of the month are the August forms, which live until they are killed by the frosts late in the month. From this cause there is towards the end of the month a very sensible diminution of the number of insects.

The early frosts warn these delicate creatures of approaching cold. Hence the whole insect population is busied late in the month in looking out snug winter quarters, or providing for the continuance of the species. Warned by the cool and frosty nights, multitudes of caterpillars prepare to spin their dense silken cocoons, which guard them against frost and cold. Such are the "Spinners," as the Germans call them, the Silk-moths, of which the American Silk-worm is a fair example. The last of September it spins its dense cocoon, in which it hybernates in the chrysalis state.

The larvæ of those moths, such as the Sphinges, or Hawk-moths, which spin no cocoon, descend deep into the earth, where they lay in rude earthen cocoons.

The wild bees may now be found frequenting flowers in considerable numbers. Both sexes of the Humble-bee, the Leaf-cutter Bee, and other smaller genera abound during the warm days.

One's attention during an unusually warm and pleasant day in this month is attracted by the clouds of insects filling the air, especially towards sunset, when the slanting rays of the sun shine through the winged hosts. On careful observation these insects will prove to be nearly all ants, and, perhaps, to belong to a single species. Looking about on the ground, an unusual activity will be noticed in the ant-hills. This is the swarming of the ants. The autumnal brood of females has appeared, and this is their marriage day.

The history of a *formicarium*, or ant's nest, is as follows: The workers, only, hybernate, and are found early in spring, taking care of the eggs and larvæ produced by the autumnal brood of females. In the course of the summer these eggs and larvæ arrive at maturity, and swarm on a hot sultry day, usually early in September. The females, after their marriage flight, for the small diminutive males seek their company at this time, descend and enter the ground to lay their eggs for new colonies, or, as Westwood states, they are often seized by the workers and retained in the old colonies. Having no more inclination to fly, they pluck off their wings and may be seen running about wingless.

The autumnal brood of Plant-lice now occur in great numbers on various plants. The last brood, however, does not consist exclusively of males and females, for of some of the wingless individuals previously supposed to be perfect insects of both sexes, Dr. W. I. Burnett found that many were in reality of the ordinary gemmiparous form, such as those composing the early summer broods.

The White Pine Plant-lice, *Lachnus strobi*, may be seen laying their long string of black oval eggs on the needles of the pine. They are accompanied by hosts of two-winged flies, Ichneumons, and in the night by many moths which feed on the Aphis-honey they secrete, and which drops upon the leaves beneath.—A. S. P.